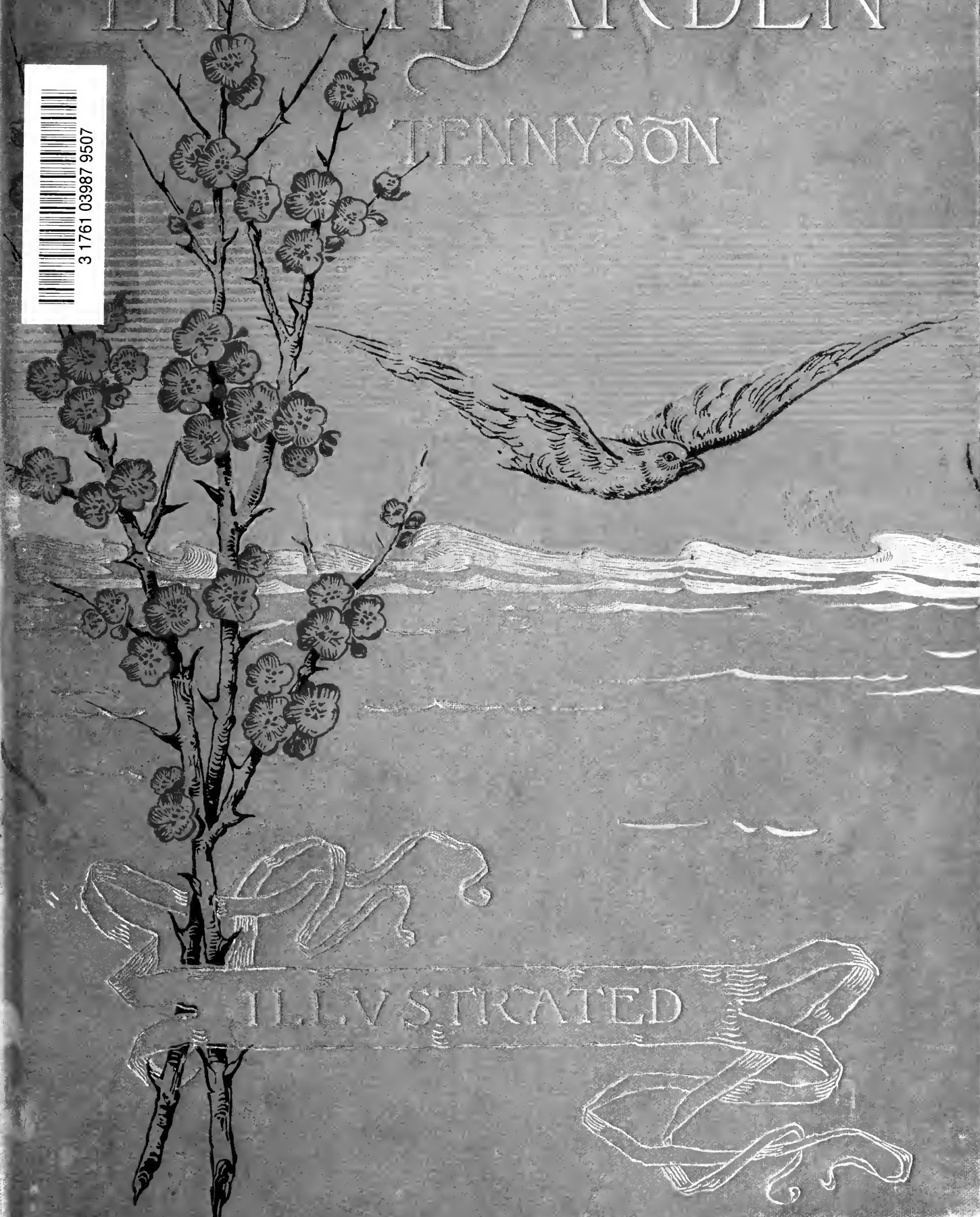


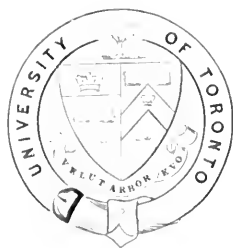
# ENOCH ARDEN

TENNYSON



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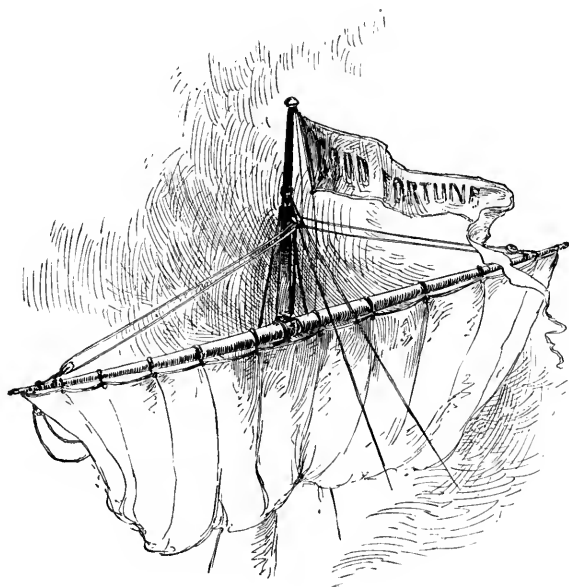






ENOCH ARDEN











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# ENOCH ARDEN

BY

ALFRED TENNYSON

*ILLUSTRATED*

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18.4.40

NEW YORK  
E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY

31 WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET

1893

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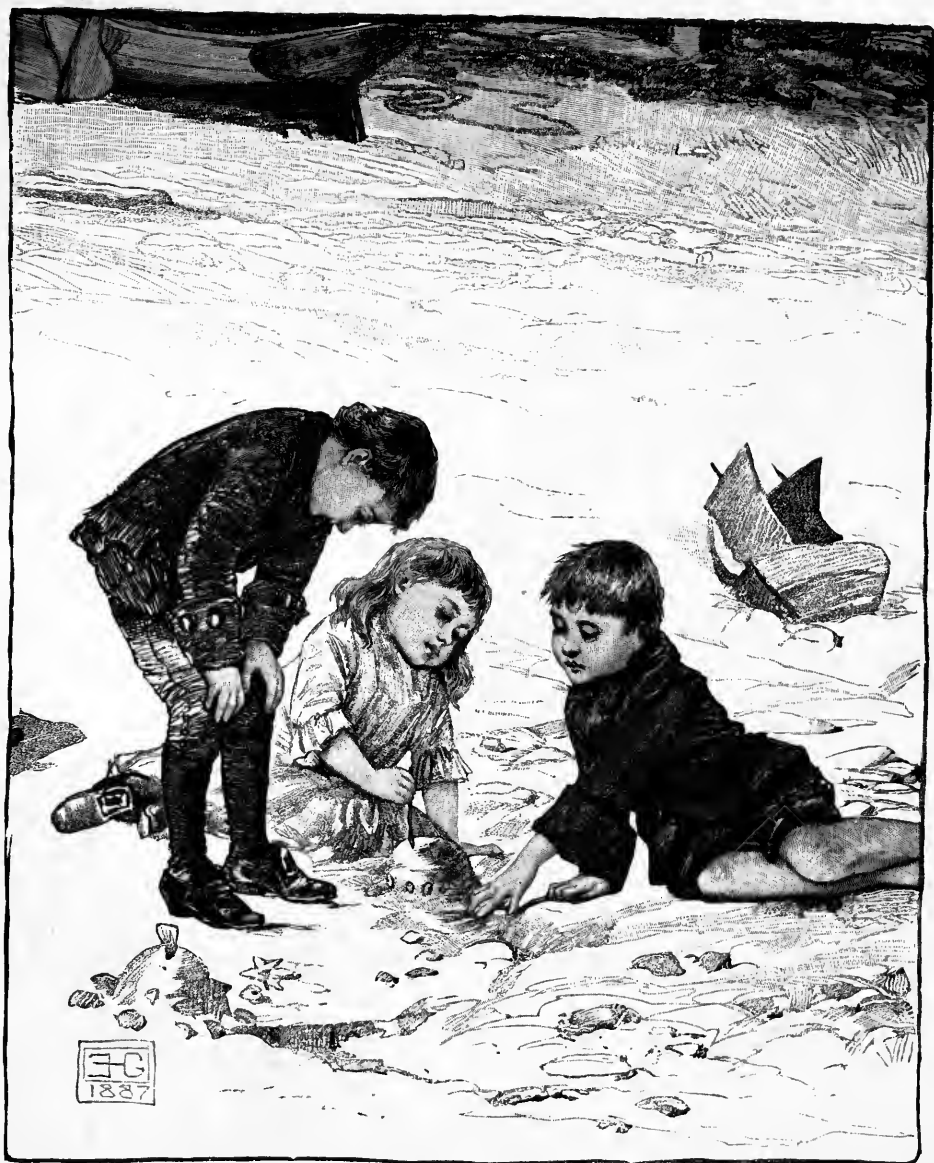
Long lines of cliff  
breaking have left a chasm;  
And in the chasm are foam  
and yellow sands;  
Beyond, red roofs about a narrow wharf  
In clyster; then a moulder'd church,  
and higher  
A long street climbs to one  
tall-tower'd Mill;

LONG lines of cliff breaking have left a chasm;  
And in the chasm are foam and yellow sands;  
Beyond, red roofs about a narrow wharf  
In cluster; then a moulder'd church; and higher  
A long street climbs to one tall-tower'd mill;  
And high in heaven behind it a gray down  
With Danish barrows; and a hazelwood,  
By autumn nutters haunted, flourishes  
Green in a cuplike hollow of the down.



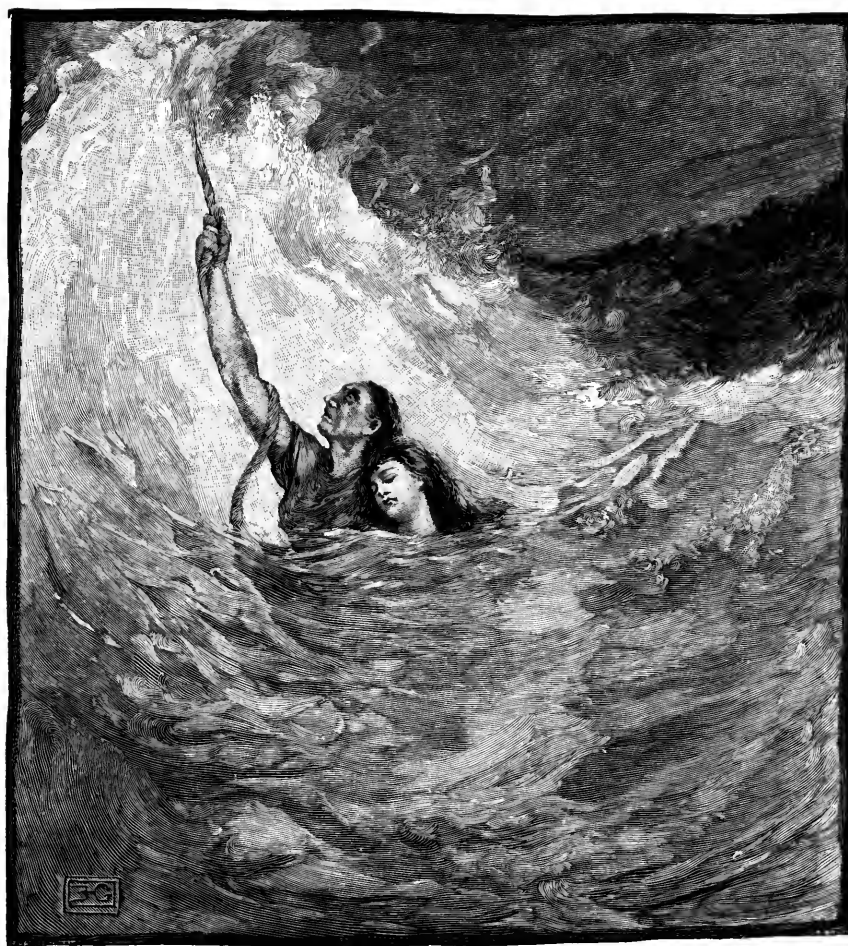
Here on this beach a hundred years ago,  
Three children of three houses, Annie Lee,  
The prettiest little damsel in the port,  
And Philip Ray, the miller's only son,  
And Enoch Arden, a rough sailor's lad  
Made orphan by a winter shipwreck, play'd  
Among the waste and lumber of the shore,  
Hard coils of cordage, swarthy fishing-nets,  
Anchors of rusty fluke, and boats updrawn;  
And built their castles of dissolving sand  
To watch them overflow'd, or following up  
And flying the white breaker, daily left  
The little footprint daily wash'd away.

A narrow cave ran in beneath the cliff:  
In this the children play'd at keeping house.  
Enoch was host one day, Philip the next,  
While Annie still was mistress; but at times  
Enoch would hold possession for a week:  
"This is my house and this my little wife."  
"Mine, too," said Philip, "turn and turn about."  
When, if they quarrell'd, Enoch stronger-made  
Was master; then would Philip, his blue eyes  
All flooded with the helpless wrath of tears,  
Shriek out, "I hate you, Enoch," and at this  
The little wife would weep for company,  
And pray them not to quarrel for her sake,  
And say she would be little wife to both.



But when the dawn of rosy childhood past,  
And the new warmth of life's ascending sun  
Was felt by either, either fixt his heart  
On that one girl; and Enoch spoke his love,  
But Philip loved in silence; and the girl  
Seem'd kinder unto Philip than to him;  
But she loved Enoch; tho' she knew it not,  
And would if ask'd deny it. Enoch set  
A purpose evermore before his eyes,  
To hoard all savings to the uttermost,  
To purchase his own boat, and make a home  
For Annie; and so prosper'd that at last  
A luckier or a bolder fisherman,  
A carefuller in peril, did not breathe  
For leagues along that breaker-beaten coast  
Than Enoch. Likewise had he served a year  
On board a merchantman, and made himself  
Full sailor; and he thrice had pluck'd a life  
From the dread sweep of the down-streaming seas:  
And all men look'd upon him favorably:  
And ere he touch'd his one-and-twentieth May  
He purchased his own boat, and made a home  
For Annie, neat and nest-like, half-way up  
The narrow street that clamber'd toward the mill.





Then, on a golden autumn eventide,  
The younger people making holiday,  
With bag and sack and basket, great and small,  
Went nutting to the hazels. Philip stay'd  
(His father lying sick and needing him)  
An hour behind; but as he climb'd the hill,  
Just where the prone edge of the wood began  
To feather toward the hollow, saw the pair,  
Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-hand,  
His large gray eyes and weather-beaten face  
All-kindled by a still and sacred fire,  
That burn'd as on an altar. Philip look'd,  
And in their eyes and faces read his doom;  
Then, as their faces drew together, groan'd,  
And slipt aside, and like a wounded life  
Crept down into the hollows of the wood;  
There, while the rest were loud in merry-making,  
Had his dark hour unseen, and rose and past  
Bearing a life-long hunger in his heart.



So these were wed, and merrily rang the bells,  
And merrily ran the years, seven happy years,  
Seven happy years of health and competence,  
And mutual love and honorable toil;  
With children; first a daughter. In him woke,  
With his first babe's first cry, the noble wish  
To save all earnings to the uttermost,  
And give his child a better bringing-up  
Than his had been, or hers; a wish renew'd,  
When two years after came a boy to be  
The rosy idol of her solitudes,  
While Enoch was abroad on wrathful seas,  
Or often journeying landward; for in truth  
Enoch's white horse, and Enoch's ocean spoil  
In ocean-smelling osier, and his face,  
Rough-redden'd with a thousand winter gales,  
Not only to the market-cross were known,  
But in the leafy lanes behind the down,  
Far as the portal-warding lion-whelp,  
And peacock-yew-tree of the lonely Hall,  
Whose Friday fare was Enoch's ministering.



Then came a change, as all things human change.  
Ten miles to northward of the narrow port  
Open'd a larger haven: thither used  
Enoch at times to go by land or sea;  
And once when there, and clambering on a mast  
In harbor, by mischance he slipt and fell:  
A limb was broken when they lifted him;  
And, while he lay recovering there, his wife  
Bore him another son, a sickly one:  
Another hand crept too across his trade  
Taking her bread and theirs; and on him fell,  
Altho' a grave and staid God-fearing man,  
Yet lying thus inactive, doubt and gloom.  
He seem'd, as in a nightmare of the night,  
To see his children leading evermore  
Low, miserable lives of hand-to-mouth,  
And her he lov'd a beggar: then he pray'd,  
"Save them from this, whatever comes to me!"  
And while he pray'd, the master of that ship  
Enoch had served in, hearing his mischance,  
Came, for he knew the man and valued him,  
Reporting of his vessel China bound,  
And wanting yet a boatswain. Would he go?  
There yet were many weeks before she sail'd,  
Sail'd from this port. Would Enoch have the place?  
And Enoch all at once assented to it,  
Rejoicing at that answer to his prayer.



So now that shadow of mischance appear'd  
No graver than as when some little cloud  
Cuts off the fiery highway of the sun.  
And isles a-light in the offing; yet the wife—  
When he was gone—the children—what to do?

Then Enoch lay long pondering on his plans;  
To sell the boat—and yet he loved her well—  
How many a rough sea had he weather'd in her!  
He knew her, as a horseman knows his horse—  
And yet to sell her—then with what she brought  
Buy goods and stores—set Annie forth in trade  
With all that seamen needed, or their wives—  
So might she keep the house while he was gone.  
Should he not trade himself out yonder? go  
This voyage more than once? yea, twice or thrice—  
As oft as needed—last, returning rich,  
Become the master of a larger craft,  
With fuller profits lead an easier life,  
Have all his pretty young ones educated,  
And pass his days in peace among his own.

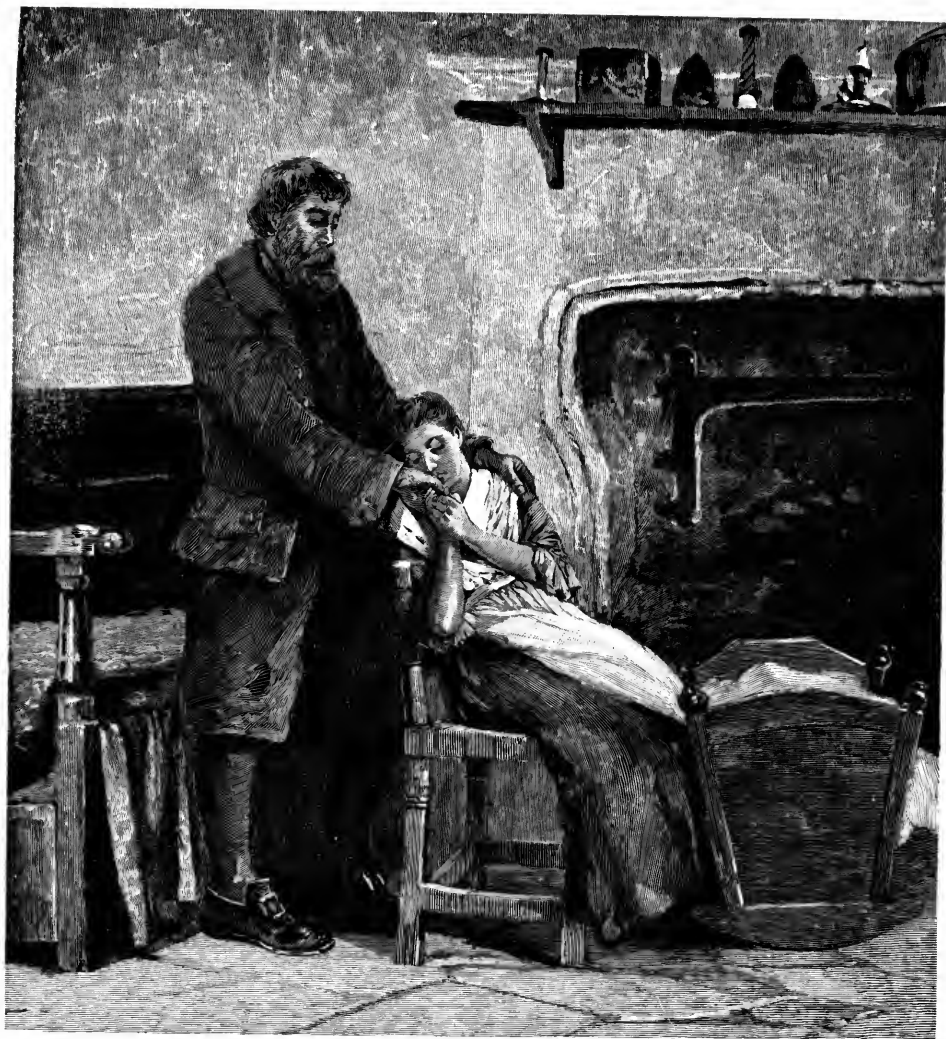




Thus Enoch in his heart determined all:  
Then, moving homeward, came on Annie pale,  
Nursing the sickly babe, her latest-born.  
Forward she started, with a happy cry,  
And laid the feeble infant in his arms;  
Whom Enoch took, and handled all his limbs,  
Appraised his weight, and fondled, father-like,  
But had no heart to break his purposes  
To Annie, till the morrow, when he spoke.

Then first since Enoch's golden ring had girt  
Her finger, Annie fought against his will;  
Yet not with brawling opposition she,  
But manifold entreaties, many a tear,  
Many a sad kiss by day by night renew'd  
(Sure that all evil would come out of it)  
Besought him, supplicating, if he cared  
For her or his dear children, not to go.  
He, not for his own self caring, but her,  
Her and her children, let her plead in vain;  
So grieving held his will, and bore it thro'.

For Enoch parted with his old sea-friend,  
Bought Annie goods and stores, and set his hand  
To fit their little streetward sitting-room  
With shelf and corner for the goods and stores.



So all day long till Enoch's last at home  
Shaking their pretty cabin, hammer and axe,  
Auger and saw, while Annie seem'd to hear  
Her own death-scaffold raising, shrill'd and rang,  
Till this was ended, and his careful hand,—  
The space was narrow,—having order'd all  
Almost as neat and close as Nature packs  
Her blossom or her seedling, paused; and he,  
Who needs would work for Annie to the last,  
Ascending tired, heavily slept till morn.

And Enoch faced this morning of farewell  
Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's fears,  
Save, as his Annie's, were a laughter to him.  
Yet Enoch, as a brave God-fearing man,  
Bow'd himself down, and in that mystery  
Where God-in-man is one with man-in-God,  
Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and babes  
Whatever came to him: and then he said,  
“Annie, this voyage by the grace of God  
Will bring fair weather yet to all of us.  
Keep a clean hearth and a clear fire for me,  
For I'll be back, my girl, before you know it.”  
Then lightly rocking baby's cradle, “and he,  
This pretty, puny, weakly little one,—  
Nay—for I love him all the better for it—  
God bless him, he shall sit upon my knees  
And I will tell him tales of foreign parts,  
And make him merry, when I come home again.  
Come, Annie, come, cheer up before I go.”



Him running on thus hopefully she heard  
And almost hoped herself; but when he turn'd  
The current of his talk to graver things,  
In sailor fashion roughly sermonizing  
On Providence and trust in Heaven, she heard,  
Heard and not heard him; as the village girl,  
Who sets her pitcher underneath the spring,  
Musing on him that used to fill it for her,  
Hears and not hears, and lets it overflow.

At length she spoke: "O Enoch, you are wise;  
And yet for all your wisdom well know I  
That I shall look upon your face no more!"

"Well, then," said Enoch, "I shall look on yours.  
Annie, the ship I sail in passes here  
(He named the day); get you a seaman's glass,  
Spy out my face, and laugh at all your fears."

But when the last of those last moments came,  
"Annie, my girl, cheer up, be comforted,  
Look to the babes; and till I come again,  
Keep everything ship-shape, for I must go.  
And fear no more for me; or if you fear  
Cast all your cares on God; that anchor holds.  
Is He not yonder in those uttermost  
Parts of the morning? if I flee to these  
Can I go from Him? and the sea is His,  
The sea is His: He made it."



THE SEA IS HIS



Enoch rose

Cast his strong arms about his drooping wife,  
And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little ones;  
But for the third, the sickly one, who slept  
After a night of feverous wakefulness,  
When Annie would have raised him, Enoch said,  
"Wake him not; let him sleep; how should the  
child

Remember this?" and kiss'd him in his cot.  
But Annie from her baby's forehead clipt  
A tiny curl, and gave it: this he kept  
Thro' all his future; but now hastily caught  
His bundle, waved his hand, and went his way.





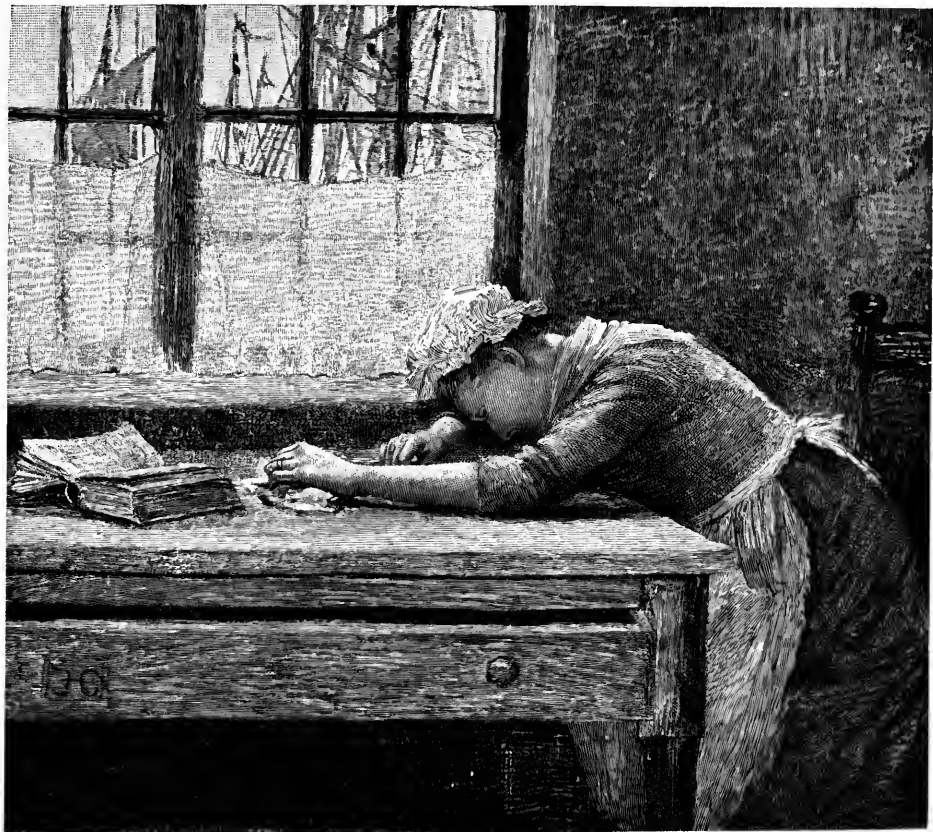
She, when the day that Enoch mention'd came,  
Borrow'd a glass, but all in vain; perhaps  
She could not fix the glass to suit her eye;  
Perhaps her eye was dim, hand tremulous;  
She saw him not: and while he stood on deck  
Waving, the moment and the vessel past.

Ev'n to the last dip of the vanishing sail  
She watch'd it, and departed weeping for him;  
Then, tho' she mourn'd his absence as his grave,  
Set her sad will no less to chime with his,  
But throve not in her trade, not being bred  
To barter, nor compensating the want  
By shrewdness, neither capable of lies,  
Nor asking overmuch and taking less,  
And still foreboding "What would Enoch say?"  
For more than once, in days of difficulty  
And pressure, had she sold her wares for less  
Than what she gave in buying what she sold:  
She fail'd and sadden'd knowing it; and thus,  
Expectant of that news which never came,  
Gain'd for her own a scanty sustenance,  
And lived a life of silent melancholy.

Now the third child was sickly-born and grew  
Yet sicklier, tho' the mother cared for it  
With all a mother's care: nevertheless,  
Whether her business often called her from it,  
Or thro' the want of what it needed most,  
Or means to pay the voice who best could tell  
What most it needed—howsoe'er it was,  
After a lingering,—ere she was aware,—  
Like the caged bird escaping suddenly,  
The little, innocent soul flitted away.



In that same week when Annie buried it,  
Philip's true heart, which hunger'd for her peace  
(Since Enoch left he had not look'd upon her),  
Smote him, as having kept aloof so long.  
"Surely," said Philip, "I may see her now,  
May be some little comfort," therefore went,  
Past thro' the solitary room in front,  
Paused for a moment at an inner door,  
Then struck it thrice, and, no one opening,  
Enter'd; but Annie, seated with her grief,  
Fresh from the burial of her little one,  
Cared not to look on any human face,  
But turn'd her own toward the wall and wept.  
Then Philip, standing up, said falteringly,  
"Annie, I came to ask a favor of you."  
He spoke; the passion in her moan'd reply,  
"Favor from one so sad and so forlorn  
As I am!" half abash'd him; yet unask'd,  
His bashfulness and tenderness at war,  
He set himself beside her, saying to her:



“I came to speak to you of what he wish’d,  
Enoch, your husband: I have ever said  
You chose the best among us—a strong man:  
For where he fixt his heart he set his hand  
To do the thing he will’d, and bore it thro’.  
And wherefore did he go this weary way,  
And leave you lonely? not to see the world—  
For pleasure?—nay, but for the wherewithal  
To give his babes a better bringing-up  
Than his had been or yours; that was his wish.  
And if he come again, vexed will he be  
To find the precious morning hours were lost,  
And it would vex him even in his grave,  
If he could know his babes were running wild  
Like colts about the waste. So, Annie, now—  
Have we not known each other all our lives?  
I do beseech you by the love you bear  
Him and his children not to say me nay—  
For, if you will, when Enoch comes again  
Why then he shall repay me—if you will,  
Annie—for I am rich and well-to-do.  
Now let me put the boy and girl to school:  
This is the favor that I came to ask.”

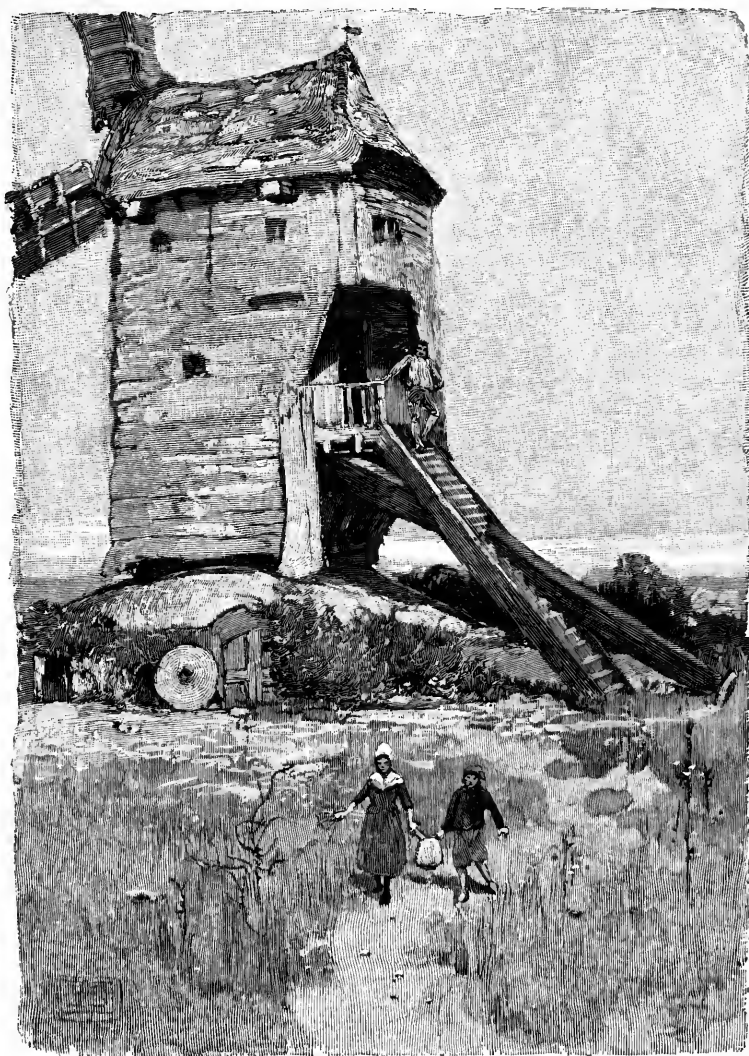


Then Annie with her brows against the wall  
Answer'd, "I cannot look you in the face;  
I seem so foolish and so broken down.  
When you came in my sorrow broke me down;  
And now I think your kindness breaks me down;  
But Enoch lives; that is borne in on me;  
He will repay you: money can be repaid:  
Not kindness such as yours."

And Philip ask'd,  
"Then you will let me, Annie?"

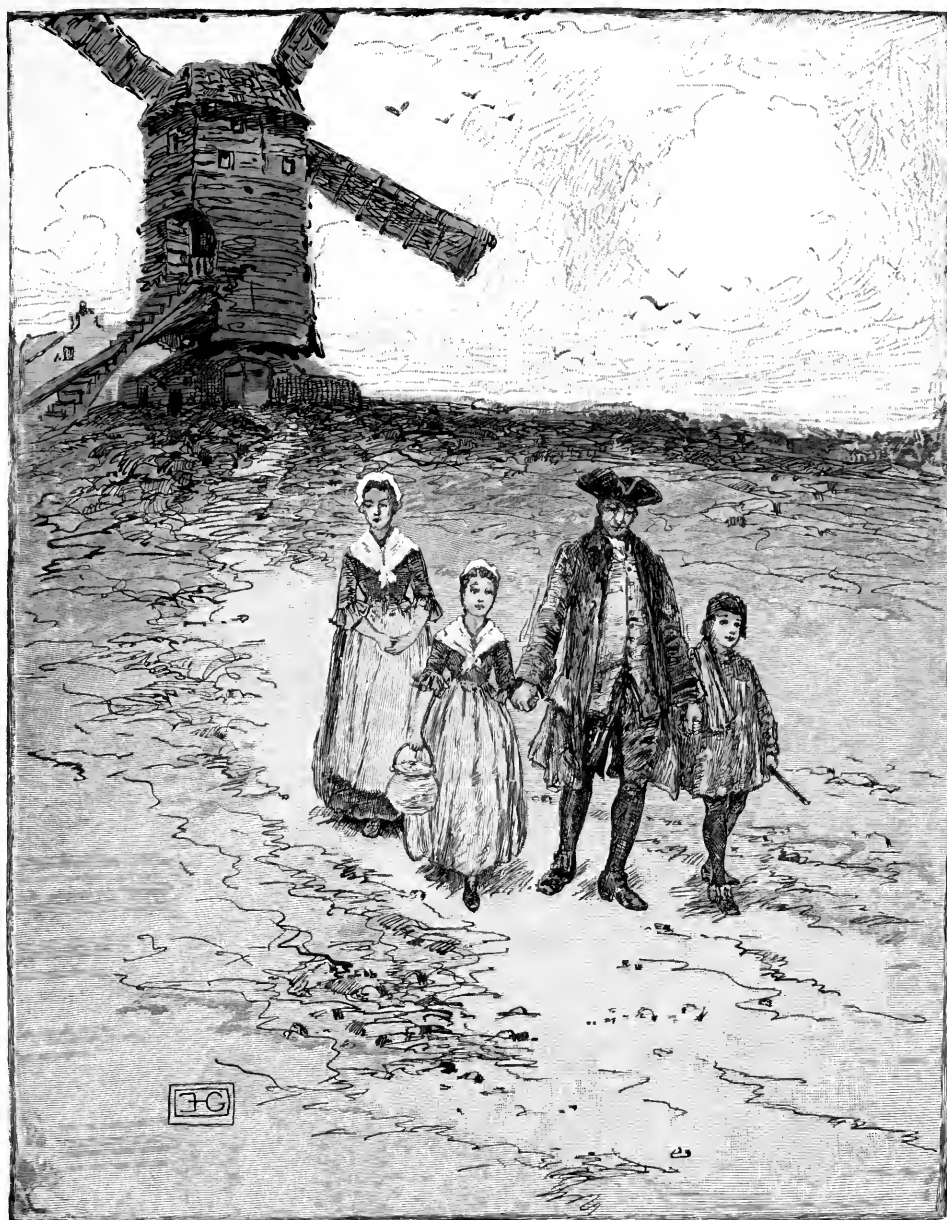
There she turn'd,  
She rose, and fixt her swimming eyes upon him,  
And dwelt a moment on his kindly face,  
Then calling down a blessing on his head  
Caught at his hand, and wrung it passionately,  
And past into the little garth beyond.  
So lifted up in spirit he moved away.  
Then Philip put the boy and girl to school,  
And bought them needful books, and every way,  
Like one who does his duty by his own,  
Made himself theirs; and tho' for Annie's sake,  
Fearing the lazy gossip of the port,  
He oft denied his heart his dearest wish  
And seldom crost her threshold, yet he sent  
Gifts by the children, garden-herbs and fruit,  
The late and early roses from his wall,  
Or conies from the down, and now and then,  
With some pretext of fineness in the meal,  
To save the offence of charitable, flour  
From his tall mill that whistled on the waste.





But Philip did not fathom Annie's mind:  
Scarce could the woman when he came upon her,  
Out of full heart and boundless gratitude,  
Light on a broken word to thank him with.  
But Philip was her children's all-in-all;  
From distant corners of the street they ran  
To greet his hearty welcome heartily;  
Lords of his house and of his mill were they;  
Worried his passive ear with petty wrongs  
Or pleasures, hung upon him, play'd with him  
And call'd him Father Philip. Philip gain'd  
As Enoch lost; for Enoch seem'd to them  
Uncertain as a vision or a dream,  
Faint as a figure seen in early dawn  
Down at the far end of an avenue,  
Going we know not where: and so ten years,  
Since Enoch left his hearth and native land,  
Fled forward, and no news of Enoch came.

It chanced one evening Annie's children long'd  
To go with others, nutting to the wood,  
And Annie would go with them; then they begg'd  
For Father Philip (as they called him) too;  
Him, like the working bee in blossom-dust,  
Blanch'd with his mill, they found; and saying to him,  
"Come with us, Father Philip," he denied;  
But when the children pluck'd at him to go,  
He laugh'd, and yielded readily to their wish,  
For was not Annie with them? and they went.



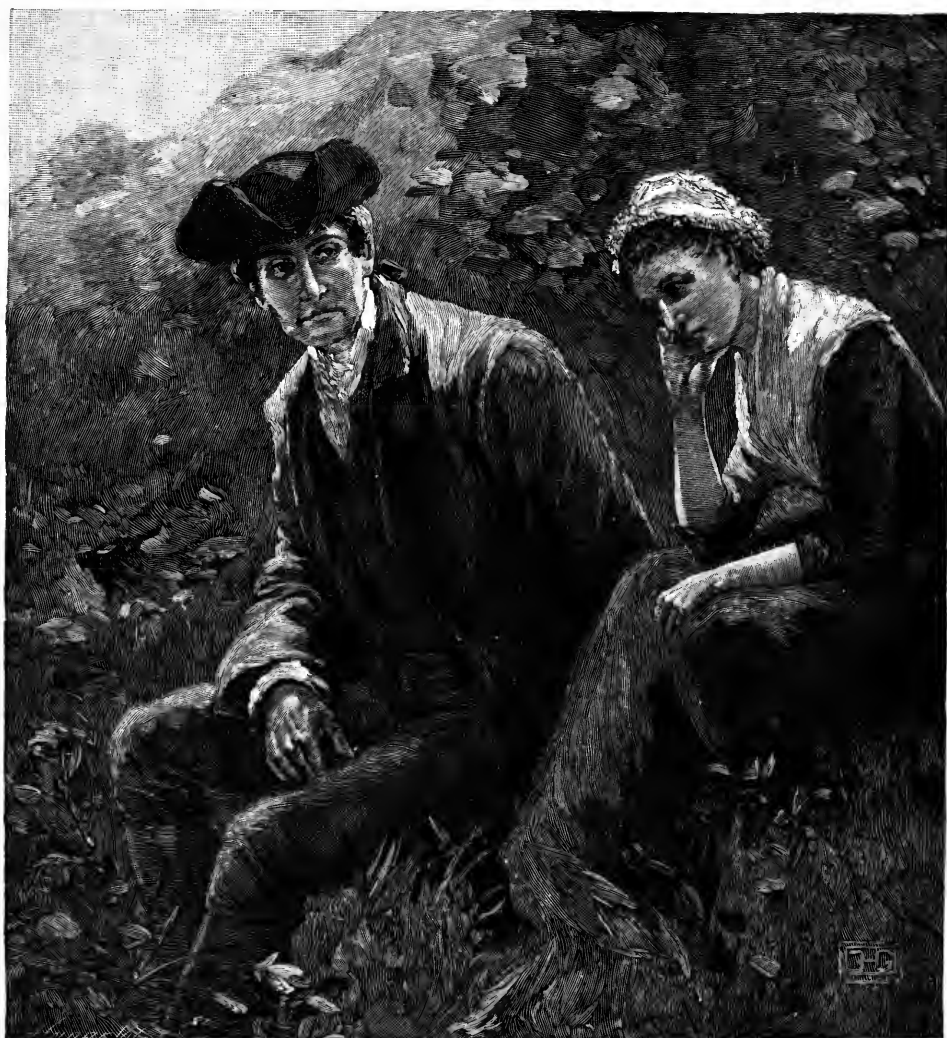
But after scaling half the weary down,  
Just where the prone edge of the wood began  
To feather toward the hollow, all her force  
Fail'd her; and sighing, "let me rest," she said.  
So Philip rested with her well-content;  
While all the younger ones with jubilant cries  
Broke from their elders, and tumultuously  
Down thro' the whitening hazels made a plunge  
To the bottom, and dispersed, and bent or broke  
The lithe, reluctant boughs to tear away  
Their tawny clusters, crying to each other  
And calling, here and there, about the wood.

But Philip, sitting at her side, forgot  
Her presence, and remember'd one dark hour  
Here in this wood, when like a wounded life  
He crept into the shadow; at last he said,  
Lifting his honest forehead, "Listen, Annie,  
How merry they are down yonder in the wood!  
Tired, Annie?" for she did not speak a word.  
"Tired?" but her face had fall'n upon her hands;  
At which, as with a kind of anger in him,  
"The ship was lost," he said, "the ship was lost!  
No more of that! why should you kill yourself  
And make them orphans quite!" and Annie said,  
"I thought not of it: but—I know not why—  
Their voices make me feel so solitary."



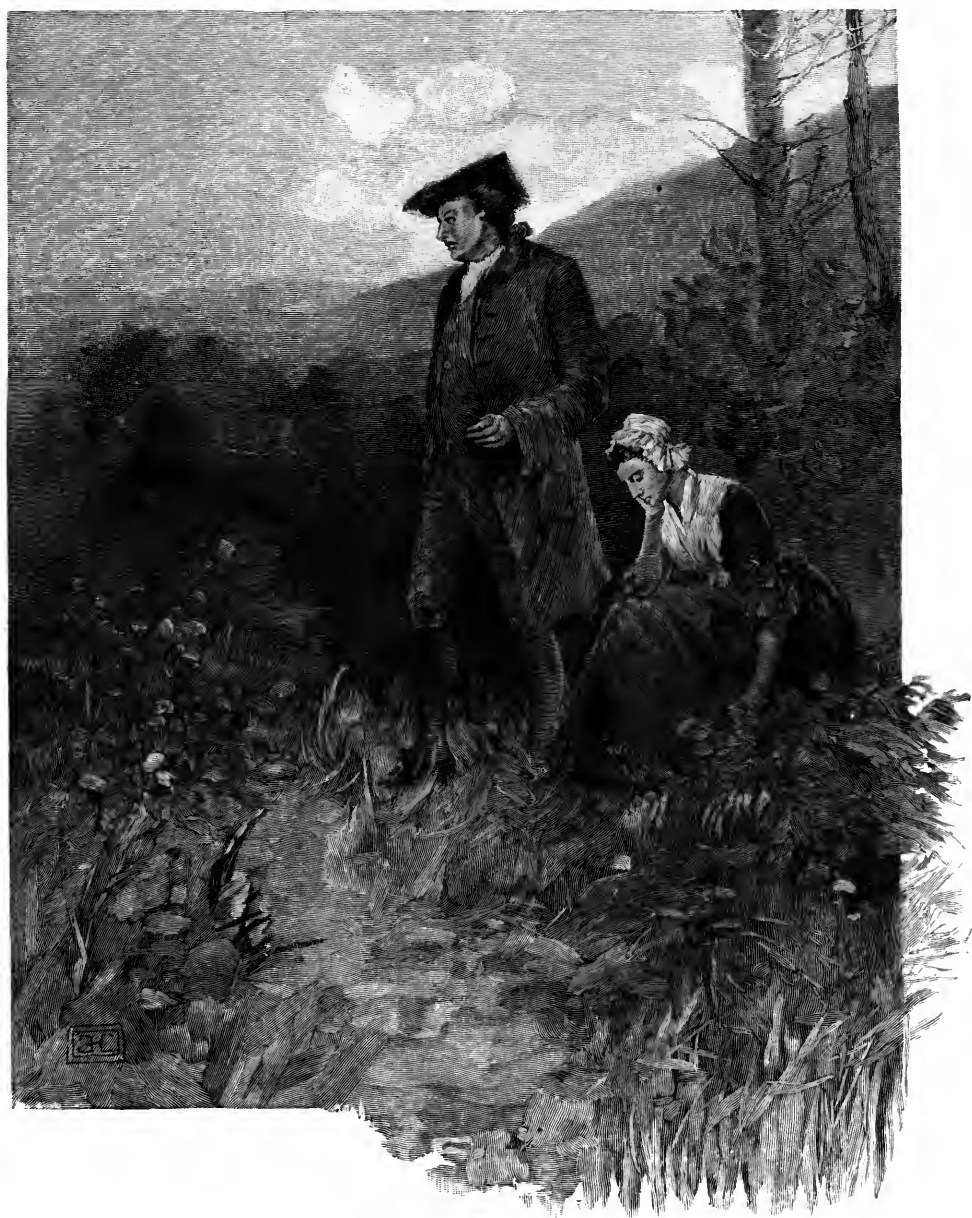
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Then Philip, coming somewhat closer, spoke:  
“Annie, there is a thing upon my mind,  
And it has been upon my mind so long,  
That tho’ I know not when it first came there,  
I know that it will out at last. O Annie,  
It is beyond all hope, against all chance,  
That he who left you ten long years ago  
Should still be living; well then—let me speak:  
I grieve to see you poor and wanting help:  
I cannot help you as I wish to do  
Unless—they say that women are so quick—  
Perhaps you know what I would have you know—  
I wish you for my wife. I fain would prove  
A father to your children: I do think  
They love me as a father: I am sure  
That I love them as if they were mine own;  
And I believe, if you were fast my wife,  
That after all these sad, uncertain years,  
We might be still as happy as God grants  
To any of His creatures. Think upon it:  
For I am well-to-do—no kin, no care,  
No burden, save my care for you and yours:  
And we have known each other all our lives,  
And I have loved you longer than you know.”



Then answered Annie; tenderly she spoke.  
"You have been as God's good angel in our house.  
God bless you for it, God reward you for it,  
Philip, with something happier than myself.  
Can one love twice? can you be ever loved  
As Enoch was? what is it that you ask?"  
"I am content," he answer'd, "to be loved  
A little after Enoch." Oh," she cried,  
Scared, as it were, "dear Philip, wait awhile:  
If Enoch comes — but Enoch will not come —  
Yet wait a year, a year is not so long:  
Surely I shall be wiser in a year:  
Oh wait a little!" Philip sadly said,  
"Annie, as I have waited all my life  
I well may wait a little." "Nay," she cried,  
"I am bound: you have my promise — in a year:  
Will you not bide your year as I bide mine?"  
And Philip answer'd, "I will bide my year."  
Here both were mute, till Philip glancing up  
Beheld the dead flame of the fallen day  
Pass from the Danish barrow overhead;  
Then fearing night and chill for Annie rose,  
And sent his voice beneath him thro' the wood,  
Up came the children laden with their spoil;  
Then all descended to the port, and there  
At Annie's door he paused and gave his hand,  
Saying gently, "Annie, when I spoke to you,  
That was your hour of weakness. I was wrong.  
I am always bound to you, but you are free."  
Then Annie, weeping, answer'd, "I am bound."





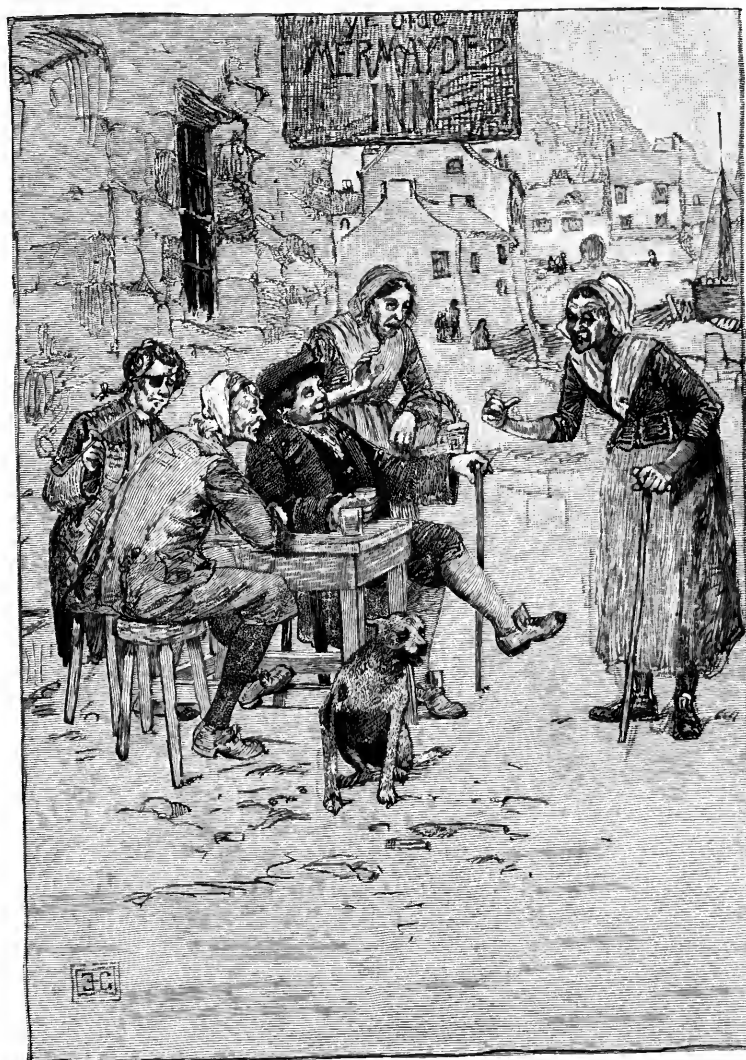
She spoke; and in one moment as it were,  
While yet she went about her household ways,  
Ev'n as she dwelt upon his latest words,  
That he had loved her longer than she knew,  
That autumn into autumn flash'd again,  
And there he stood once more before her face,  
Claiming her promise. "Is it a year?" she ask'd.  
"Yes, if the nuts," he said, "be ripe again:  
Come out and see." But she—she put him off—  
So much to look to—such a change—a month—  
Give her a month—she knew that she was bound—  
A month—no more. Then Philip with his eyes  
Full of that life-long hunger, and his voice  
Shaking a little like a drunkard's hand,  
"Take your own time, Annie, take your own  
time."

And Annie could have wept for pity of him;  
And yet she held him on delayingly  
With many a scarce-believable excuse,  
Trying his truth and his long-sufferance  
Till half another year had slipt away.



By this the lazy gossips of the port,  
Abhorrent of a calculation crost,  
Began to chafe as at a personal wrong.  
Some thought that Philip did but trifle with her;  
Some that she but held off to draw him on;  
And others laugh'd at her and Philip too,  
As simple folks that knew not their own minds;  
And one, in whom all evil fancies clung,  
Like serpent eggs together, laughingly  
Would hint at worse in either. Her own son  
Was silent, tho' he often look'd his wish;  
But evermore the daughter pressed upon her  
To wed the man so dear to all of them  
And lift the household out of poverty;  
And Philip's rosy face contracting grew  
Careworn and wan; and all these things fell on her  
Sharp as reproach.

At last one night it chanced  
That Annie could not sleep, but earnestly  
Pray'd for a sign. "My Enoch, is he gone?"  
Then compass'd round by the blind wall of night  
Brook'd not the expectant terror of her heart,  
Started from her bed, and struck herself a light,  
Then desperately seized the holy Book,  
Suddenly set it wide to find a sign,  
Suddenly put her finger on the text,  
"Under the palm-tree." That was nothing to her:  
No meaning there: she closed the Book and slept:  
When lo! her Enoch, sitting on a height,  
Under a palm-tree, over him the Sun:



“He is gone,” she thought, “he is happy, he is  
singing

Hosanna in the highest: yonder shines  
The Sun of Righteousness, and these be palms  
Whereof the happy people strowing cried,  
‘Hosanna in the highest!’” Here she woke,  
Resolved, sent for him, and said wildly to him,  
“There is no reason why we should not wed.”  
“Then for God’s sake,” he answer’d, “both our sakes,  
So you will wed me, let it be at once.”

So these were wed and merrily rang the bells,  
Merrily rang the bells and they were wed.  
But never merrily beat Annie’s heart.  
A footstep seem’d to fall beside her path,  
She knew not whence; a whisper on her ear,  
She knew not what; nor loved she to be left  
Alone at home, nor ventured out alone.  
What ail’d her then, that ere she enter’d, often  
Her hand dwelt lingeringly on the latch,  
Fearing to enter? Philip thought he knew:  
Such doubts and fears were common to her state,  
Being with child: but when her child was born,  
Then her new child was as herself renew’d,  
Then the new mother came about her heart,  
Then her good Philip was her all-in-all.  
And that mysterious instinct wholly died.



GE

And where was Enoch? prosperously sail'd  
The ship "Good Fortune," tho' at setting forth  
The Biscay, roughly ridging eastward, shook  
And almost overwhelm'd her, yet unvext  
She slipt across the summer of the world,  
Then after a long tumble about the Cape  
And frequent interchange of foul and fair,  
She, passing thro' the summer world again,  
The breath of heaven came continually  
And sent her sweetly by the golden isles,  
Till silent in her oriental haven.

There Enoch traded for himself, and bought  
Quaint monsters for the market of those times,  
A gilded dragon, also, for the babes.

Less lucky her home-voyage: at first indeed  
Thro' many a fair sea-circle, day by day,  
Scarce-rocking, her full-busted figure-head  
Stared o'er the ripple feathering from her bows;  
Then follow'd calms, and then winds variable,  
Then baffling, a long course of them; and last  
Storm, such as drove her under moonless heavens,  
Till hard upon the cry of "breakers!" came  
The crash of ruin, and the loss of all  
But Enoch and two others. Half the night,  
Buoy'd upon floating tackle and broken spars,  
These drifted, stranding on an isle at morn  
Rich, but the loneliest in a lonely sea.



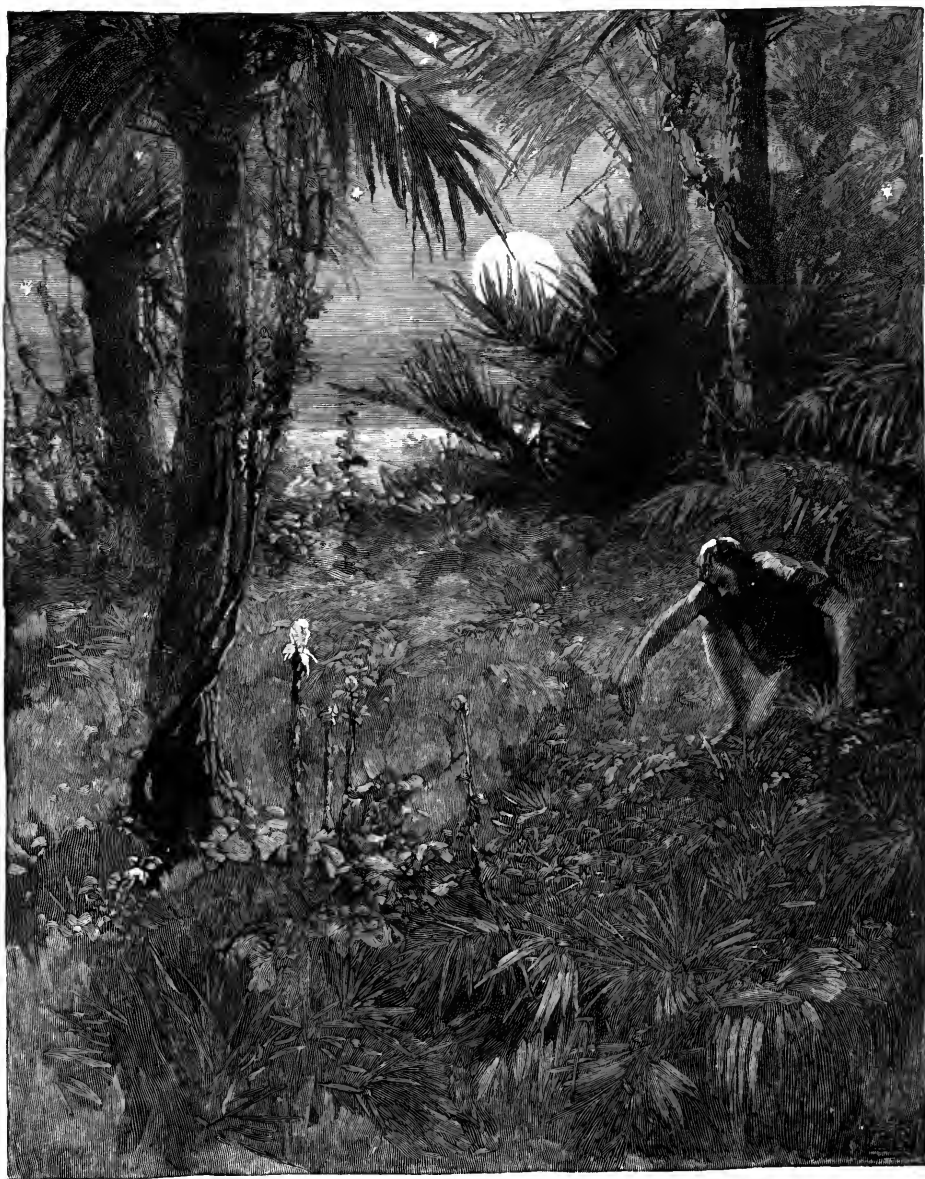


No want was there of human sustenance:  
Soft fruitage, mighty nuts, and nourishing roots;  
Nor save for pity was it hard to take  
The helpless life so wild that it was tame.  
There in a seaward-gazing mountain-gorge  
They built and thatch'd with leaves of palm, a hut,  
Half hut, half native cavern. So the three,  
Set in this Eden of all plenteousness,  
Dwelt with eternal summer, ill-content.

For one, the youngest, hardly more than boy,  
Hurt in that night of sudden ruin and wreck,  
Lay lingering out a five-years' death in life.  
They could not leave him. After he was gone,  
The two remaining found a fallen stem;  
And Enoch's comrade, careless of himself,  
Fire-hollowing this in Indian fashion, fell  
Sun-stricken, and that other lived alone.  
In those two deaths he read God's warning "wait."



The mountain wooded to the peak, the lawns  
And winding glades high up like ways to Heaven,  
The slender coco's drooping crown of plumes,  
The lightning flash of insect and of bird,  
The lustre of the long convolvuluses  
That coil'd around the stately stems, and ran  
Ev'n to the limit of the land, the glows  
And glories of the broad belt of the world,  
All these he saw; but what he fain had seen  
He could not see, the kindly human face,  
Nor ever hear a kindly voice, but heard  
The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean fowl,  
The league-long roller thundering on the reef,  
The moving whisper of huge trees that branch'd  
And blossom'd in the zenith, or the sweep  
Of some precipitous rivulet to the wave,  
As down the shore he ranged, or all day long  
Sat often in the seaward-gazing gorge,  
A shipwreck'd sailor, waiting for a sail:  
No sail from day to day, but every day  
The sunrise broken into scarlet shafts  
Among the palms and ferns and precipices;  
The blaze upon the waters to the east;  
The blaze upon his island overhead;  
The blaze upon the waters to the west;



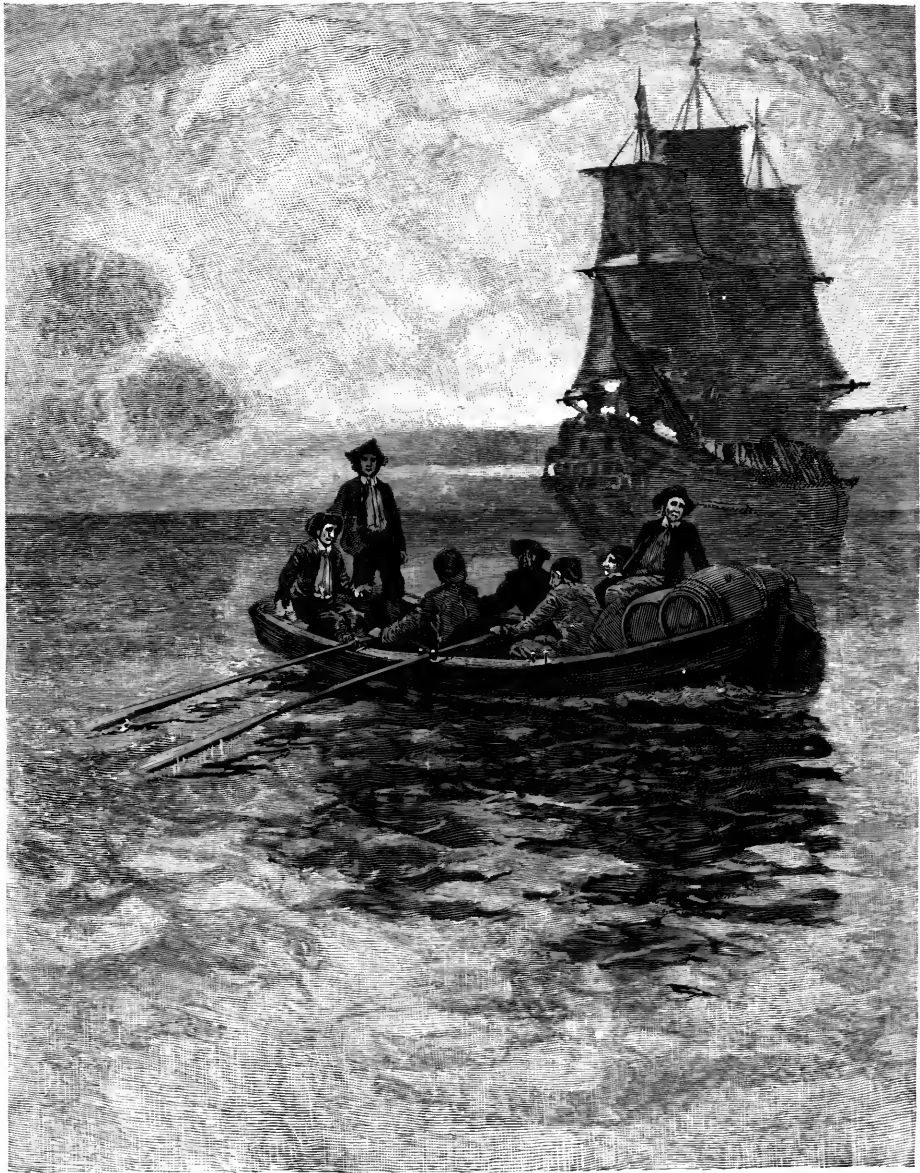
Then the great stars that globed themselves in  
Heaven,  
The hollower-bellowing ocean, and again  
The scarlet shafts of sunrise — but no sail.  
There often as he watch'd or seem'd to watch,  
So still, the golden lizard on him paused,  
A phantom made of many phantoms moved  
Before him haunting him, or he himself  
Moved haunting people, things and places, known  
Far in a darker isle beyond the line;  
The babes, their babble, Annie, the small house,  
The climbing street, the mill, the leafy lanes,  
The peacock-yew-tree and the lonely Hall,  
The horse he drove, the boat he sold, the chill  
November dawns and dewy-glooming downs,  
The gentle shower, the smell of dying leaves,  
And the low moan of leaden-color'd seas.

Once, likewise, in the ringing of his ears,  
Tho' faintly, merrily — far and far away —  
He heard the pealing of his parish bells;  
Then, tho' he knew not wherefore, started up  
Shuddering, and when the beauteous, hateful isle  
Return'd upon him, had not his poor heart  
Spoken with That, which being everywhere  
Lets none, who speaks with Him, seem all alone,  
Surely the man had died of solitude.

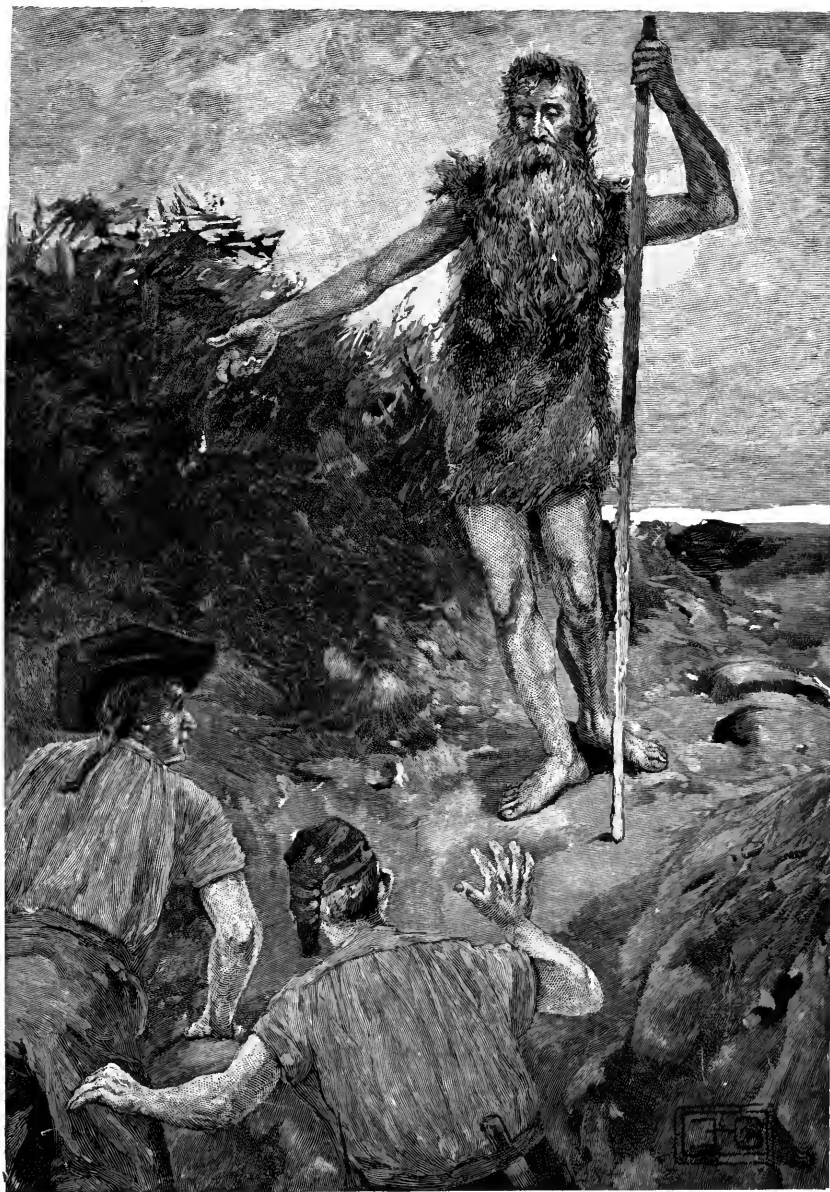


Thus over Enoch's early-silvering head  
The sunny and rainy seasons came and went  
Year after year. His hopes to see his own,  
And pace the sacred old familiar fields,  
Not yet had perish'd, when his lonely doom  
Came suddenly to an end. Another ship  
(She wanted water) blown by baffling winds,  
Like the Good Fortune, from her destined course,  
Stay'd by this isle, not knowing where she lay:  
For since the mate had seen at early dawn  
Across a break on the mist-wreathen isle  
The silent water slipping from the hills,  
They sent a crew that, landing, burst away  
In search of stream or fount and fill'd the shores  
With clamor.





Downward from his mountain gorge  
Stept the long-hair'd, long-bearded solitary,  
Brown, looking hardly human, strangely clad,  
Muttering and mumbling, idiot like it seem'd,  
With inarticulate rage, and making signs  
They knew not what: and yet he led the way  
To where the rivulets of sweet water ran;  
And ever as he mingled with the crew,  
And heard them talking, his long bounden tongue  
Was loosen'd, till he made them understand;  
Whom, when their casks were fill'd they took  
aboard:



And there the tale he utter'd brokenly,  
Scarce-credited at first, but more and more,  
Amazed and melted all who listen'd to it:  
And clothes they gave him and free passage home;  
But oft he work'd among the rest and shook  
His isolation from him. None of these  
Came from his country, or could answer him,  
If question'd, aught of what he cared to know.  
And dull the voyage was with long delays,  
The vessel scarce sea-worthy; but evermore  
His fancy fled before the lazy wind  
Returning, till beneath a clouded moon  
He like a lover down thro' all his blood  
Drew in the dewy, meadowy, morning breath  
Of England, blown across her ghostly wall:  
And that same morning, officers and men,  
Levied a kindly tax upon themselves,  
Pitying the lonely man, and gave him it:  
Then moving up the coast they landed him,  
Ev'n in that harbor whence he sail'd before.



There Enoch spoke no word to any one,  
But homeward — home — what home? had he a  
home?

His home, he walk'd. Bright was that afternoon,  
Sunny but chill; till drawn thro' either chasm,  
Where either havens open'd on the deeps,  
Roll'd a sea-haze and whelm'd the world in gray;  
Cut off the length of highway on before,  
And left but narrow breadth to left and right  
Of wither'd holt or tilth or pasturage.  
On the night naked tree the robin piped  
Disconsolate, and thro' the dripping haze  
The dead weight of the dead leaf bore it down:  
Thicker the drizzle grew, deeper the gloom;  
Last, as it seem'd, a great mist-blotted light  
Flared on him, and he came upon the place.

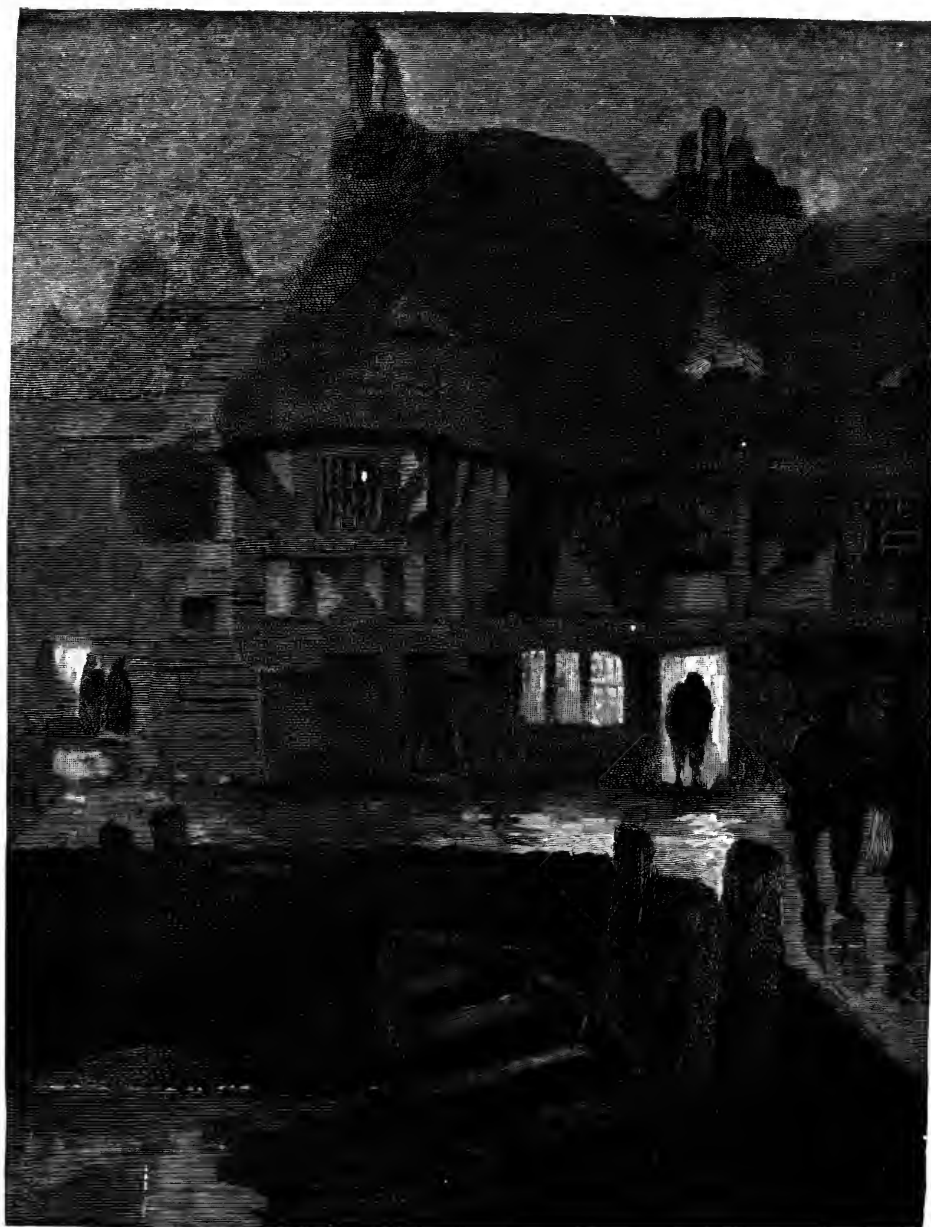
Then down the long street having slowly stolen,  
His heart foreshadowing all calamity,  
His eyes upon the stones, he reach'd the home  
Where Annie lived and loved him, and his babes  
In those far-off seven happy years were born;  
But finding neither light nor murmur there  
(A bill of sale gleamed thro' the drizzle) crept  
Still downward thinking "dead or dead to me!"



Down to the pool and narrow wharf he went,  
Seeking a tavern which of old he knew,  
A front of timber-crost antiquity,  
So propt, worm-eaten, ruinously old,  
He thought it must have gone; but he was gone  
Who kept it; and his widow, Miriam Lane,  
With daily-dwindling profits held the house;  
A haunt of brawling seamen once, but now  
Still, with yet a bed for wandering men.  
There Enoch rested silent many days.

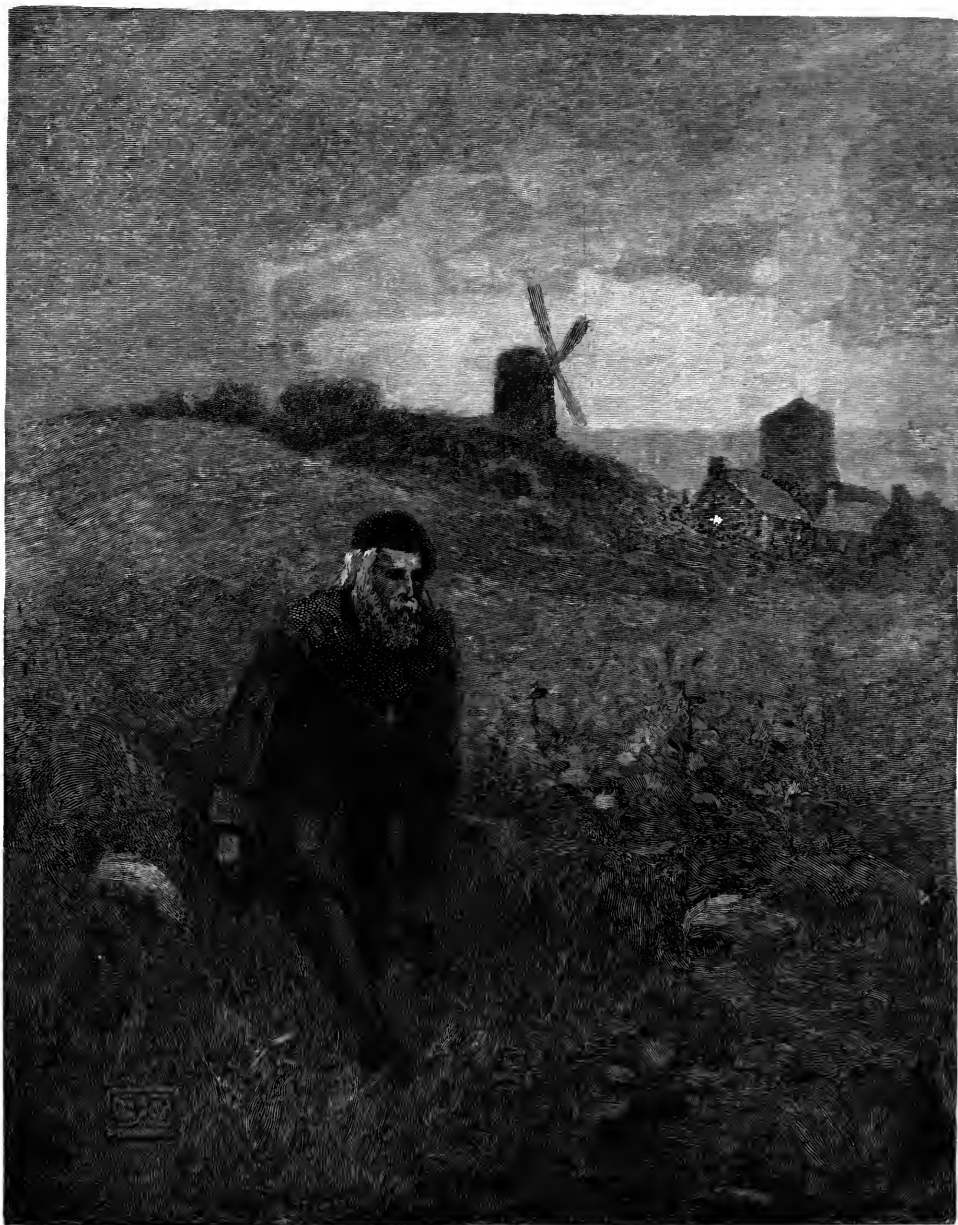
But Miriam Lane was good and garrulous,  
Nor let him be, but often breaking in,  
Told him, with other annals of the port,  
Not knowing—Enoch was so brown, so bow'd,  
So broken—all the story of his house.  
His baby's death, her growing poverty,  
How Philip put her little ones to school,  
And kept them in it, his long wooing her,  
Her slow consent, and marriage, and the birth  
Of Philip's child: and o'er his countenance  
No shadow past, nor motion: any one,  
Regarding, well had deem'd he felt the tale  
Less than the teller: only when she closed,  
"Enoch, poor man, was cast away and lost,"  
He, shaking his gray head pathetically,  
Repeated, muttering, "cast away and lost;"  
Again in deeper inward whispers, "lost!"



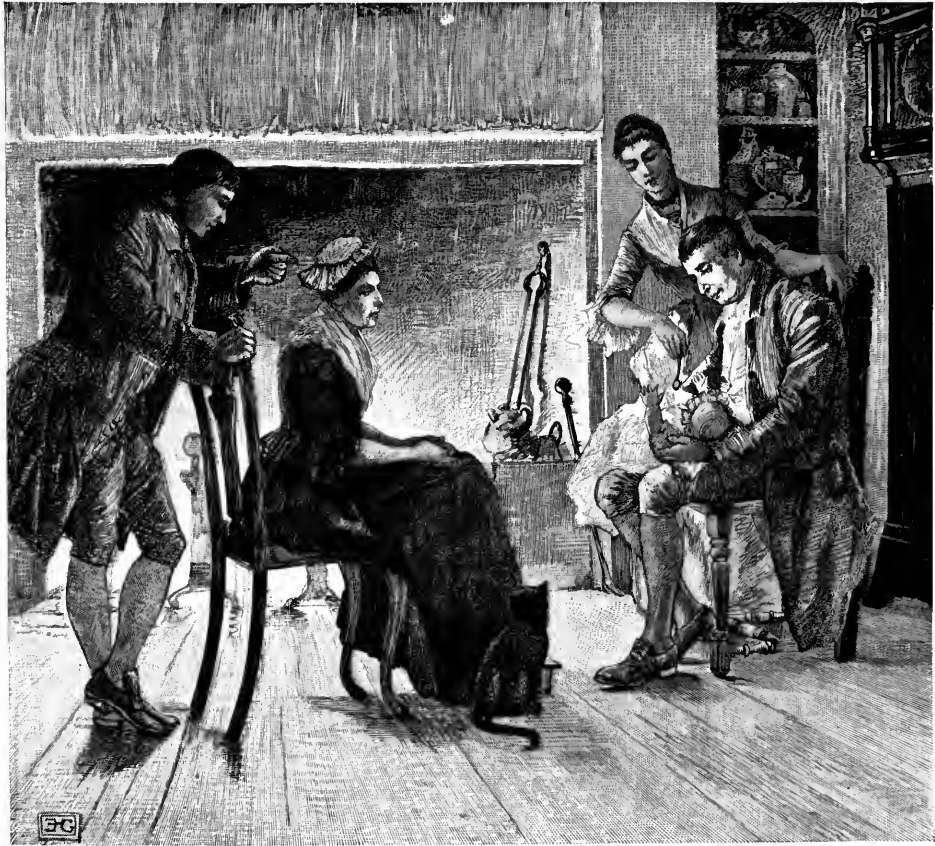


But Enoch yearn'd to see her face again;  
"If I might look on her sweet face again  
And know that she is happy." So the thought  
Haunted and harass'd him, and drove him forth,  
At evening when the dull November day  
Was growing duller twilight, to the hill.  
There he sat down gazing on all below;  
There did a thousand memories roll upon him,  
Unspeakable for sadness. By and by  
The ruddy square of comfortable light,  
Far-blazing from the rear of Philip's house,  
Allured him, as the beacon-blaze allures  
The bird of passage, till he madly strikes  
Against it, and beats out his weary life.

For Philip's dwelling fronted on the street,  
The latest house to landward; but behind,  
With one small gate that open'd on the waste,  
Flourish'd a little garden square and wall'd:  
And in it throve an ancient evergreen,  
A yew-tree, and all round it ran a walk  
Of shingle, and a walk divided it:  
But Enoch shunn'd the middle walk and stole  
Up by the wall, behind the yew; and thence  
That which he better might have shunn'd, if griefs  
Like his have worse or better, Enoch saw.

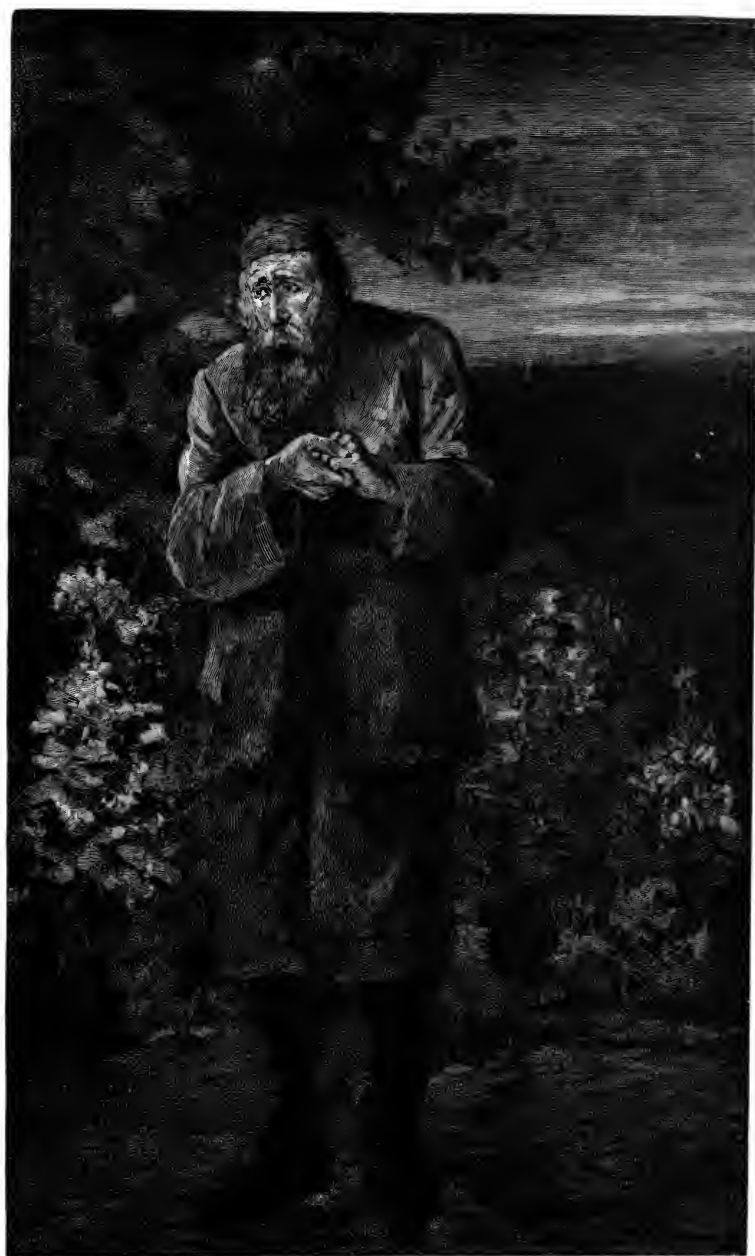


For cups and silver on the burnish'd board  
Sparkled and shone; so genial was the hearth:  
And on the right hand of the hearth he saw  
Philip, the slighted suitor of old times,  
Stout, rosy, with his babe across his knees,  
And o'er her second father stoopt a girl,  
A later but a loftier Annie Lee,  
Fair-hair'd and tall, and from her lifted hand  
Dangled a length of ribbon and a ring  
To tempt the babe, who rear'd his creasy arms,  
Caught at and ever miss'd it, and they laugh'd:  
And on the left hand of the hearth he saw  
The mother glancing often toward her babe,  
But turning now and then to speak with him,  
Her son, who stood beside her tall and strong,  
And saying that which pleased him, for he smiled.



Now when the dead man come to life beheld  
His wife his wife no more, and saw the babe  
Hers, yet not his, upon the father's knee,  
And all the warmth, the peace, the happiness,  
And his own children tall and beautiful,  
And him, that other, reigning in his place,  
Lord of his rights and of his children's love, —  
Then he, tho' Miriam Lane had told him all,  
Because things seen are mightier than things heard,  
Stagger'd and shook, holding the branch, and fear'd  
To send abroad a shrill and terrible cry,  
Which in one moment, like the blast of doom,  
Would shatter all the happiness of the hearth.

He therefore turning softly like a thief,  
Lest the harsh shingle should grate underfoot,  
And feeling all along the garden-wall,  
Lest he should swoon and tumble and be found,  
Crept to the gate, and open'd it, and closed,  
As lightly as a sick man's chamber-door,  
Behind him, and came out upon the waste.



And there he would have knelt, but that his knees  
Were feeble, so that falling prone he dug  
His fingers into the wet earth, and pray'd.

“Too hard to bear! why did they take me thence?  
O God Almighty, blessed Saviour, Thou  
That didst uphold me on my lonely isle,  
Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness  
A little longer! aid me, give me strength  
Not to tell her, never to let her know,  
Help me not to break in upon her peace.  
My children, too! must I not speak to these?  
They know me not. I should betray myself.  
Never: no father's kiss for me — the girl  
So like her mother, and the boy, my son.”

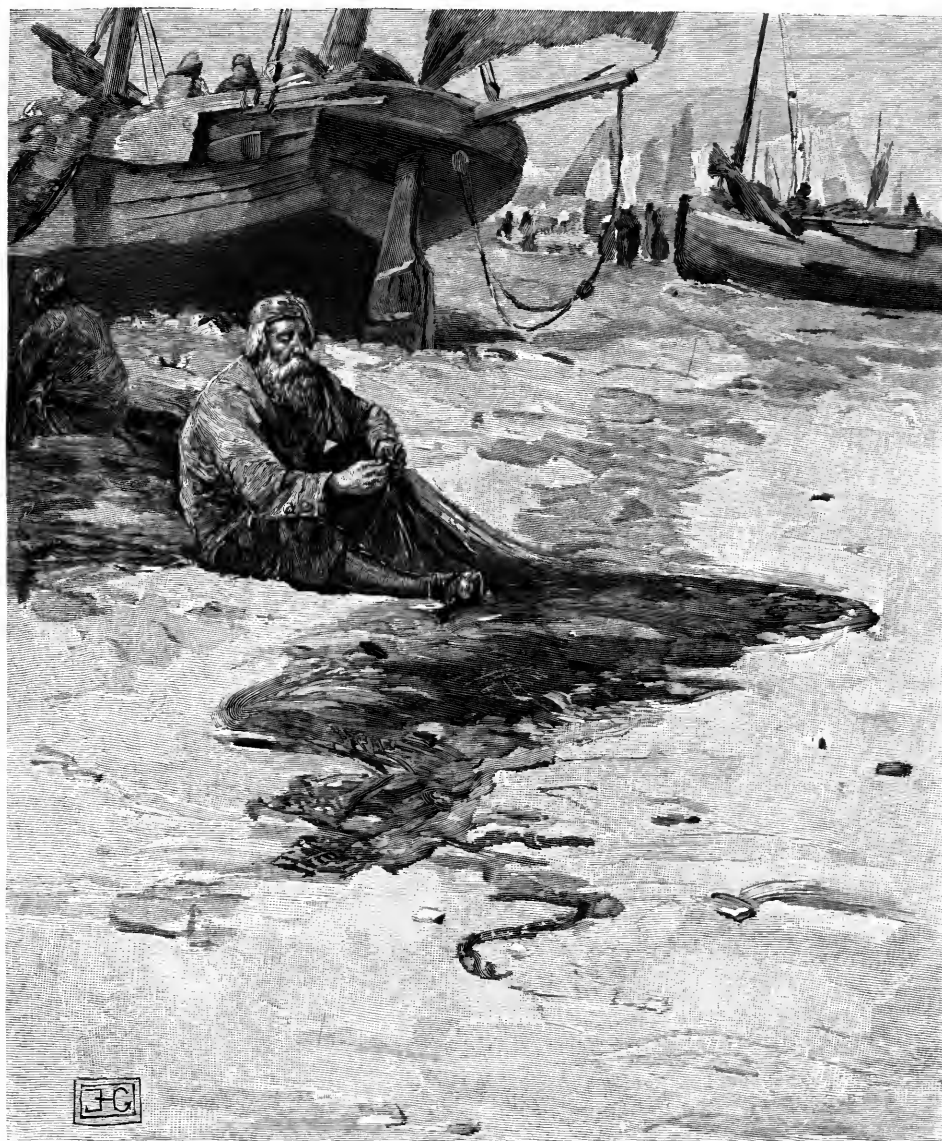
There speech, and thought, and nature fail'd a little,  
And he lay tranced; but when he rose and paced  
Back toward his solitary home again,  
All down the long and narrow street he went  
Beating it in upon his weary brain,  
As tho' it were the burden of a song;  
“Not to tell her, never to let her know.”





GIVE ME STRENGTH

He was not all unhappy. His resolve  
Upbore him, and firm faith, and evermore  
Prayer from a living source within the will,  
And beating up thro' all the bitter world,  
Like fountains of sweet water in the sea,  
Kept him a living soul. "This miller's wife,"  
He said to Miriam, "that you told me of,  
Has she no fear that her first husband lives?"  
"Ay, ay, poor soul!" said Miriam, "fear enow!  
If you could tell her you had seen him dead,  
Why, that would be her comfort;" and he thought,  
"After the Lord has call'd me she shall know,  
I wait his time," and Enoch set himself,  
Scorning an alms, to work whereby to live.  
Almost to all things could he turn his hand.  
Cooper he was and carpenter, and wrought  
To make the boatmen fishing-nets, or help'd  
At lading and unlading the tall barks,  
That brought the stinted commerce of those days;  
Thus earn'd a scanty living for himself:  
Yet since he did but labor for himself,  
Work without hope, there was not life in it  
Whereby the man could live; and as the year  
Roll'd itself round again to meet the day  
When Enoch had return'd, a languor came  
Upon him, gentle sickness, gradually  
Weakening the man, till he could do no more,  
But kept the house, his chair, and last his bed.  
And Enoch bore his weakness cheerfully.  
For sure no gladlier does the stranded wreck  
See thro' the gray skirts of a lifting squall  
The boat that bears the hope of life approach  
To save the life despair'd of, than he saw  
Death dawning on him, and the close of all.



For thro' that dawning gleam'd a kindlier hope  
On Enoch thinking, "after I am gone,  
Then may she learn I loved her to the last."  
He call'd aloud for Miriam Lane and said,  
"Woman, I have a secret—only swear,  
Before I tell you—swear upon the book  
Not to reveal it, till you see me dead."  
"Dead!" clamor'd the good woman, "hear him  
talk!

I warrant, man, that we shall bring you round."  
"Swear," added Enoch, sternly, "on the book."  
And on the book, half-frighted, Miriam swore.  
Then Enoch, rolling his gray eyes upon her,  
"Did you know Enoch Arden of this town?"—  
"Know him?" she said, "I knew him far away.  
Ay, ay, I mind him coming down the street;  
Held his head high, and cared for no man, he."  
Slowly and sadly Enoch answer'd her:  
"His head is low, and no man cares for him.  
I think I have not three days more to live;  
I am the man." At which the woman gave  
A half-incredulous, half-hysterical cry.  
"You Arden, you! nay,—sure he was a foot  
Higher than you be." Enoch said again,  
"My God has bow'd me down to what I am;  
My grief and solitude have broken me;  
Nevertheless, know you that I am he  
Who married—but that name has twice been  
changed—



I married her who married Philip Ray.  
Sit, listen." Then he told her of his voyage,  
His wreck, his lonely life, his coming back,  
His gazing in on Annie, his resolve,  
And how he kept it. As the woman heard,  
Fast flow'd the current of her easy tears,  
While in her heart she yearn'd incessantly  
To rush abroad all round the little haven,  
Proclaiming Enoch Arden and his woes;  
But awed and promise-bounden she forbore,  
Saying only, "See your bairns before you go!  
Eh, let me fetch 'em, Arden," and arose  
Eager to bring them down, for Enoch hung  
A moment on her words, but then replied:



“Woman, disturb me not now at the last,  
But let me hold my purpose till I die.  
Sit down again; mark me and understand,  
While I have power to speak. I charge you now,  
When you shall see her, tell her that I died  
Blessing her, praying for her, loving her;  
Save for the bar between us, loving her  
As when she laid her head beside my own.  
And tell my daughter Annie, whom I saw  
So like her mother, that my latest breath  
Was spent in blessing her and praying for her.  
And tell my son that I died blessing him.  
And say to Philip that I blest him too;  
He never meant us anything but good.  
But if my children care to see me dead,  
Who hardly knew me living, let them come,  
I am their father; but she must not come,  
For my dead face would vex her after-life.  
And now there is but one of all my blood  
Who will embrace me in the world to-be:  
This hair is his: she cut it off and gave it,  
And I have borne it with me all these years,  
And thought to bear it with me to my grave;  
But now my mind is changed, for I shall see him,  
My babe in bliss: wherefore when I am gone,  
Take, give her this, for it may comfort her:  
It will, moreover, be a token to her,  
That I am he.”





He ceased; and Miriam Lane  
Made such a voluble answer promising all,  
That once again he roll'd his eyes upon her  
Repeating all he wish'd, and once again  
She promised.

Then the third night after this,  
While Enoch slumber'd motionless and pale,  
And Miriam watch'd and dozed at intervals,  
There came so loud a calling of the sea,  
That all the houses in the haven rang.  
He woke, he rose, he spread his arms abroad,  
Crying with a loud voice, "A sail! a sail!  
I am saved;" and so fell back and spoke no more.

So past the strong heroic soul away.  
And when they buried him the little port  
Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.















Pl.           Tennyson, Alfred Tennyson  
5556           Enoch Arden  
Al  
1893

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